

The Tragedy of Hamlet

How smart a lash that speech doth give my conscience,
The harlots cheek beautied with plastring art,
Is not more ugly to the thing that helps it,
Than is my deed to my most painted word:
O heave burden!

Enter Hamlet.

Pol. I hear him coming, withdraw my Lord.

Ham. To be, or not to be, that is the question,
Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer
The slings and arrowes of outrageous fortune,
Or to take armes against a sea of troubles,
And by opposing end them: To dye to sleepe
No more; and by a sleepe to say we end
The heart-ake, and the thousand naturall shokes
That flesh is heire to; 'tis a consummation
Devoutly to be wisht, to dye to sleepe,
To sleep perchance to dreame, I there's the rub,
For in that sleep of death what dreames may come,
When we have shuffled off this mortall coyle
Must give us pause, there's the respect
That makes calamity of so long life:
For who would beare the whips and scornes of time,
Th'oppressors wrong, the proud mans contumely,
The pangs of despised love, and the Lawes delay,
The insolence of office, and the spurnes
That patient merit of th'unworthy takes,
When as himselfe might his *Quietus* make
With a bare bodkin? who would fardels beare,
To grunt and sweat under a weary life?
But that the dread of something after death,
The undiscover'd Countrey, from whose borne
No traveller returnes, puzzels the will
And makes us rather beare those ills we have,
Than flye to others that we know not of.
Thus conscience does make cowards,
And thus the native hiew of resolution
Is sicklied ore with the pale cast of thought:
And enterprises of great pitch and moment,
With this regard their currents turne awry,

And

Prince of Denmarke.

And lose the name of action. Soft you now,
The faire *Ophelia*, Nimph in thy Orizons?
Be all my sins remembered?

Ophel. Good my Lord,
How does your honour for this many a day?

Ham. I humbly thanke you, well.

Ophel. My Lord I have remembrances of yours,
That I have longed long to re-deliver,
I pray you now receive them.

Ham. No, not I, I never gave you ought.

Ophel. My honour'd Lord, you know right well you did,
And with them words of so sweet breath composed
As made these things more rich: their perfume lost,
Take these againe: for to the noble minde
Rich gifts waxe poore when givers prove unkind.

There my Lord,

Ham. Ha, ha, are you honest?

Ophel. My Lord.

Ham. Are you faire?

Ophel. What meanes your Lordship?

Ham. That if you bee honest and faire, you should admit no
discourse to your beauty.

Ophel. Could beauty my Lord have better commerce
Than with honestie.

Ham. I truly, for the power of beautie will sooner transforme
honestie from what it is to a bawd, than the force of honestie can
translate beauty to his likenesse: this was sometime a Paradoxe,
but now the time gives it prooffe. I did love you once.

Ophel. Indeed my Lord you made me beleev'e so.

Ham. You should not have belev'd mee, for vertue cannot so
evacuate our old stocke but we shall rellish of it: I loved you not.

Ophel. I was the more deceived.

Ham. Get thee a Nunry, why wouldst thou be a breeder of sin-
ners? I am my selfe indifferent honest, but yet I could accuse me
of such things, that it were better my mother had not borne me: I
am very proud, revengefull, ambitious, with more offences at my
beck than I have thoughts to put them in, imagination to give the
shape, or time to act them in: what should such fellows as I doe
crawling.